

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 GENEVA 06188 241757Z
ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 06188

IO/LAB FOR MILLS; S/IL FOR DALE GOOD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ILO, ELAB, PORT
SUBJECT: US-ILO RELATIONS: APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS

REF: (A) STATE 38223, (B) STATE 101278

1. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING LAST FEW DAYS, HIGH-LEVEL, AUTHORITATIVE ILO SOURCES HAVE INFORMED LABATT THAT DIRECTOR-GENERAL BLANCHARD PLANS TO MAKE A DRAMATIC APPEAL TO THE DELEGATES AT THE JUNE CONFERENCE TO AGREE TO "TAKE NOTE" OF THE 1978 REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. BLANCHARD HOPES THAT IF THE DELEGATES AGREE TO NOTE THE REPORT RATHER THAN VOTING ON WHETHER TO ACCEPT IT MUCH OF THE CONTENTIOUSNESS THAT HAS DOMINATED ILO CONFERENCES IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS WOULD BE REDUCED. IN ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, BLANCHARD BELIEVES THERE SHOULD BE LESS CONFUSION OVER THE ROLES OF THE STANDARD-SETTING MACHINERY OF THE ILO. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN IS THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS, WHOSE ANNUAL REPORT SERVES AS THE BASIS FOR THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE. WHEN THE CON-

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 GENEVA 06188 241757Z

ERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT IS SUBJECTED TO POLITICS AND REJECTED BY THE CONFERENCE (AS IN 1977) THERE IS A FALL-OUT ON THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS AND ITS OWN REPORT. BLANCHARD AND OTHER ILO OFFICIALS BELIEVE THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS SHOULD BE SEPARATED FROM THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE, STANDING AS AN AUTHORITATIVE ANALYSIS OF CONVENTIONS BY AN INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS.

2. BLANCHARD DOES NOT INTEND BY HIS ACTION TO ELIMINATE OR REDUCE DEBATE ON THE FINDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE. HE BELIEVES DEBATE COULD AND SHOULD CONTINUE. IF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE FINDS A COUNTRY TO BE PARTICULARLY GUILTY OF VIOLATING A CONVENTION OR RECOMMENDATION, MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS AND DELEGATES HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL THE ILO CONSTITUTIONAL PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINTS.

3. ILO OFFICIALS HAVE ASKED OUR REACTION TO THE BLANCHARD INITIATIVE. THEY REALIZE THE ISSUE IS CONTROVERSIAL AND THAT BLANCHARD MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY GAINING THE SUPPORT OF PARTICULARLY THE G-77 AND SOVIET-INFLUENCED DELEGATES. THE MISSION BELIEVES THE PROPOSAL IS SOUND, ESPECIALLY IN SO FAR AS IT WOULD INCREASE THE INDEPENDENCE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS WORK. WE UNDERSTAND A SIMILAR CONCEPT WAS EXPLORED POSITIVELY BY THE AFL-CIO WITHIN THE LAST FEW MONTHS.

4. MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT VIEWS ON THE BLANCHARD INITIATIVE. FYI: WE UNDERSTAND THE ILO IS ALSO SEEKING AFL-CIO REACTION THROUGH IRVING BROWN. END FYI.

5. ILO OFFICIALS ASKED THAT WE TREAT THE FOREGOING AS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 GENEVA 06188 241757Z

EXTREMELY SENSITIVE AND CONFIDENTIAL. VANDEN HEUVEL

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